



**Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Southern District of Texas**

**Donald J. DeGabrielle, Jr. • United States Attorney**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 31, 2006  
[WWW.USDOJ.GOV/USAO/TXS](http://WWW.USDOJ.GOV/USAO/TXS)

JOHN YEMBRICK  
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE  
(713) 567-9388

**THREE SENTENCED IN WEAPONS-FOR-DRUGS DEAL**

HOUSTON, TX – Three men involved in a \$25 million dollar weapons-for-drugs deal to provide material support to a Colombian terrorist organization were sentenced to lengthy prison terms without parole, United States Attorney Don DeGabrielle announced today.

Elkin Alberto Arroyave-Ruiz, 37, also known as Comandante Napo, and Edgar Fernando Blanco-Puerta, 59, also known as Comandante Emilio, both Colombian nationals, and Uwe Jensen, 70, a naturalized United States citizen from Denmark, were sentenced to prison today for their roles in a multi-million dollar weapons-for-drugs deal.

Jensen, Arroyave, and Blanco pleaded guilty on June 24, 2003, November 5, 2003, and October 24, 2004, respectively, to charges of conspiracy to provide material support and resources to the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (“AUC”), a foreign terrorist organization. The AUC is a paramilitary organization originally designated a foreign terrorist organization by the United States Secretary of State on September 10, 2001. Jensen and Blanco also pleaded guilty to conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute cocaine. Jensen was arrested in Houston on November 5, 2002. Arroyave and Blanco were arrested in San Jose, Costa Rica, on the same day, and successfully extradited from Costa Rica in 2003 and 2004, respectively. All three defendants have been in custody since the date of their arrest.

At a sentencing hearing this morning, United States District Judge David Hittner sentenced Arroyave to 15 years (180 months) in federal prison. Blanco, convicted of conspiring to possess with intent to distribute more than 150 kilograms of cocaine from a terrorist organization to purchase weapons intended to support the activities of the organization, was sentenced to life imprisonment. He will also serve 15 years (180 months) for the conspiracy to provide material support to the terrorism organization conviction. Both sentences will be served concurrently. Uwe Jensen, who assisted co-defendant Carlos Ali Romero-Varela, 46, to broker the weapons-for-drugs deal with the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (“AUC”), was sentenced to 14 years (168 months) in federal prison for each of his two counts of conviction, which will be served concurrently. All federal prison terms are without parole. Both Arroyave and Blanco face deportation to Colombia following their release from prison.

Carlos Ali Romero-Varela is pending sentencing.

The convictions of Jensen, Arroyave, and Blanco are the result of a Federal Bureau of

Investigation (FBI) undercover operation dubbed Operation White Terror. The investigation began in September 2001 when Uwe Jensen met an FBI confidential source and learned that the confidential source had connections to Eastern Europe. Jensen introduced the source to Carlos Ali Romero Varela, his boss, and negotiations began in meetings held in Houston for the confidential source to provide Warsaw Pact weapons to the AUC in exchange for \$25 million in cocaine. The deal was to be brokered by Romero and Jensen. Romero arranged to have a copy of a CD-ROM displaying samples of Russian-made weapons delivered to Colombia. The CD-ROM included photographs of assault rifles, including AK-47's, sub-machine guns, sniper rifles, as well as rocket propelled grenade launchers and shoulder fired anti-aircraft missiles. The CD-ROM was ultimately presented to potential customers representing the AUC, including Arroyave, also known as Comandante Napo, and Blanco, also known as Comandante Emilio.

This case is the result of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force investigation conducted by the Houston offices of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Drug Enforcement Administration, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Jeff Vaden and Stuart A. Burns.

# # #